

**Questions & Answers for
Bacterial Urine Culture NCD
Renal Failure Disease
9/11/03**

Q1. What is the decision you announce today?

A1. The current NCD for bacterial urine culture includes the following ICD-9-CM diagnosis codes in the list of Codes Covered by Medicare:

584.5 Acute renal failure, with lesion of tubular necrosis

584.9 Acute renal failure, unspecified

585 Chronic renal failure

586 Renal failure, unspecified

We have taken the position that the list of ICD-9-CM Codes Covered by Medicare is intended to contain only those codes that flow from the narrative of the indications in the NCD. The only indication in the narrative of the bacterial urine culture NCD that we find may support the inclusion of renal failure in the list of covered codes is the indication for patients about to undergo renal transplantation. Renal transplantation would only occur on patients with chronic renal failure. Consequently, we intent to issue an NCD to remove ICD-9-CM codes 584.5, 584.9 and 586 from the list of ICD-9-CM codes covered by Medicare.

Q2. What will be the effective date of the decision to change the NCD?

A2. Medicare national coverage determinations are prospectively effective. We cannot make a determination effective retroactively. We hope to be able to issue a NCD and make the necessary changes to the claims processing system to have the determination effective for services furnished on or after January 1, 2004.

Q3. How should the public go about requesting similar code changes to the NCDs for procedures and diagnoses they believe should be covered?

A3. It is our belief that the covered code list should flow from the narrative of the NCD (description of the service and covered indications). If someone believes that a code flows from the present narrative NCD, they need to identify the code they believe should be added, identify the indication in the existing narrative, and explain the nexus between the code and indication. Requests for the addition of codes that do not flow from the existing NCD must meet our normal criteria for acceptance as an NCD that was published in the April 27, 1999 *Federal Register* and is available on the Internet at <http://cms.hhs.gov/coverage.8a1.asp>. These requests require that the request be accompanied by scientific evidence to support the position.

